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# MARKETING ACTIVITIES



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Address all inquiries to
The Editor, Marketing Activities
Production and Marketing Admin.
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# Agricultural Policy Recommendations

By Nathan Koenig

The testimony which the U. S. Department of Agriculture [recently] presented before the House and Senate agricultural committee grew out of studies of postwar agricultural needs which began early in the war.

For the past year, [the Department has] had a number of committees working out specific recommendations in every field of its work. These recommendations were coordinated into five major reports. The chairmen of the coordinating committees presented the recommendations at the Congressional hearings. So this testimony is the product of a long history; it is a product of the thinking of many people, inside and outside the Department....

## Sustained Abundance

The basic policy recommended [in the testimony]--toward which all specific programs would point--was a policy of "organized, sustained, and realistic abundance." This concept of sustained abundance was first enunciated by Secretary Anderson at the opening of the Congressional hearings and is the key to the entire testimony presented by the Department.

Such a policy is in line with the responsibility of the Federal Government to promote maximum employment, production, and purchasing power as directed in the Employment Act of 1946. But beyond that, a policy of abundance would seem to be the only practical course. There are several reasons.

For one thing, a policy of scarcity would be unrealistic and unworkable. During the war we experienced a revolution in agricultural production. Our farmers are now producing a third more food than they were in prewar years. There is no turning back from this increasing efficiency. The wartime revolution was merely the speeding up of a long-time trend. The application of improved varieties, machines, and techniques already perfected will continue this increase in efficiency of production for many years.

In the face of this outlook it evidently would be impossible to limit total production over a period of years without resorting to controls so stringent as to be highly impractical. We as a Nation can, if we wish, limit production of one or more items and shift those resources into other channels, but in the light of our experience and improved technology we do not believe we could effectively limit total production within the democratic framework.

Furthermore, our studies and our wartime experiences have shown us that our consumers want the abundance which farmers can produce. They are now consuming 18 percent more than prewar, and would obviously like considerably more of many farm products. By supplying only the reasonable wants of our own people--the wants supported by full employment--

and by supplying reasonable export and industrial markets, we can not only market as much total agricultural production as we have now but can actually expand the production of some commodities.

The second reason a policy of abundance is the only practical course is that such a policy is necessary to save our soil. To give our consumers enough of all the kinds of food they want, we would need to turn more to grassland agriculture. Our people want more livestock and poultry products, and greater production of those commodities would require the same type of changes needed for better soil conservation--more land in pasture, less in soil-depleting crops.

The third reason for this policy is that our present position of world leadership demands that we lead toward world abundance. We must continue to demonstrate the economic strength of our democracy. A policy of scarcity in this country would be an invitation to world scarcity, accompanied by increasing tariffs, import quotas, and economic self-sufficiency....

## Program Recommendations

What program changes are needed to carry out this policy?

There is nothing revolutionary in the program recommendations. They merely build on the past, attempt to make improvements on the basis of experience, and fill in the gaps in the present program.

Obviously, if we are to have abundant production, we must give attention to maintaining consumption during periods of low economic activity. This is one of the weak spots in the present program. Agriculture cannot be prosperous without full industrial employment and good wages, but Government action can be of marked assistance in cushioning the ill effect of recession on farm incomes and on the diets of consumers. Government can and should put a floor under the consumption of food.

An important first step in this direction has been made in the school lunch program. But the current program reaches only about a fourth of our school children. It should be expanded. Our school children make up a sizable segment of our population. If we saw to it that they had a good lunch each day, regardless of economic conditions, it would be of assistance in stabilizing food consumption as well as making a great contribution to the Nation's health.

In good times and bad we need to continue our program of direct purchases to remove localized surpluses, particularly of highly perishable items. Such food can continue to be distributed to public welfare agencies and to the school lunch program.

In addition to these, we need to have on the books some form of food allotment program which, in times of decreased purchasing power, can enable disadvantaged families to buy food at reduced prices. We believe this program should be started on an experimental basis in the near future so as to permit development of sound administrative machinery.

Also, if it can be launched on a small scale while the economy is still relatively healthy, the psychological effects would be good. It would let industry know that we as a Nation mean business when be talk about putting a floor under consumption, and thus encourage industry to maintain high production. It would be used as a deterrent to recession rather than saved for use as an attempted cure for depression.

Even though we place a floor under consumption, we should still have programs to encourage production shifts needed to meet changes in demand. Farm prices will also still need protection against the depressing effects of exceptionally large crops, or sudden decreases in demand at home or abroad.... Sudden changes in the purchase program of foreign nations can throw askew the most careful planning and change a commodity picture from scarcity to surplus in a very short time. Our producers of flue-cured tobacco have experienced that sort of thing in recent months due to the cessation of British purchases. Exceptionally good weather can have similar effects, as witness our potato experiences. So we need price supports and we need acreage allotments. We hope we won't have to use them much, but it is essential to have them on the books, and they should cover all major commodities for which such programs are practical.

Price supports should be made flexible so that they can be raised or lowered to get needed shifts in production. Also there are certain changes which might be made in the parity formula so as to bring parity prices of the various agricultural commodities into a more equitable relationship. If all farm prices were at 100 percent of parity today, producers of some items would be faring much better than producers of other products.

Though we need to modernize the parity formula, the Department of Agriculture feels that the basic concept is sound and should be retained.

## Conservation

A second broad segment of our proposal deals with conservation. We have made a lot of progress in soil conservation in the last decade or so. And we have learned a lot. But we were still fighting a losing battle before the war, and now the war and its aftermath have set us back still further. That is a condition which no sane people should long tolerate. We must accelerate our soil-conservation efforts.

The Department believes we should continue to work through the three techniques already developed: Education, rendering technical assistance and guidance, and making incentive payments to farmers who carry out recommended conservation practices. As an aid to more scientific conservation, technical surveys should be made of the conservation needs and recommended practices on all our farm land. In the more critical areas, simple farm plans should also be worked out for each farm. Government agencies working with individual farmers would then integrate their assistance with the plan for each farm.

To enable closer integration and more efficient administration it was recommended that the programs of the Soil Conservation Service and

the Agricultural Conservation Program be combined.... The Department recommended that there be one elected farmer committee in each county which would coordinate farm program activities at the county level. There should also be one State committee which would act for all Federal agricultural programs in the State.

Moving on to our forestry situation, Department studies show we have abused our timber resources as we have abused the soil of our farms. One-third of the United States is in forest land, and we have already denuded much of it. At the present rate of cutting, our saw timber is disappearing 50 percent faster than it is growing.

Recommendations in this field include: First, adequate aid to private forest landowners--including technical assistance, adequate credit, aid in forest planting, increased fire protection, and disease control. Second, public control of cutting and other forest practices on private land sufficient to prevent destruction and to keep the land productive. And third, intensified development and management of the Nation's forests....

## Human Resources

National policy and programs cannot be complete or adequate if they deal only with physical resources, prices, and the like. Policy and programs are meant to serve people and should do so directly as well as indirectly. So it is appropriate to ask ourselves what can be done directly to conserve our human resources on the land. When you study the picture of how farm people as a whole live in this Nation, here is what you find. Twenty-six million people, roughly one-fifth of the Nation's population, live on farms. Last year, with relatively high farm prices, this one-fifth of our people received only one-ninth of the national income.

The great majority of our farmers do not fare as well as even those figures would indicate. Just before the war--as shown by the 1940 Census--50 percent of the farms in the U. S. produced 90 percent of the Nation's total agricultural product. The other half produced only 10 percent. Over a million farms, as defined by the Census, had an average production in 1940 worth only $250. Many of those were farms in name only and the families on them obviously received some income from nonagricultural sources. But there was another group of 3 million farms in 1940--which were real farms--with average production worth only $700. This last group includes half the farms of the Nation; the two groups together include two-thirds of the total.

Most of the farms in these two groups are totally inadequate in land and equipment to yield a decent income even with good farm prices.

We have recommended Government encouragement of industries in rural areas so as to increase opportunities for nonfarm employment; adequate credit and other assistance to enable farmers to get on economic sized units; further legal protection of farm laborers, including migratory workers; and other aids in meeting human problems....

Most farm people fare worse than city people in many ways other than income. They have poorer schools, poorer medical and hospital services, poorer libraries and recreational facilities. Fewer of them have telephones, electricity, and running water in their homes. In short, in rural areas the opportunities for good living lag far behind the rest of the Nation.

The Department has made various recommendations to help correct some of these inequalities, including the expansion of medical aid in rural areas. The growing success of the rural electrification program is a good indication that we can speed the trend toward better rural living.

## Research

[Another] phase of the proposed policy and program...is research. The Department feels that a continuing broad program of research is absolutely essential if we are continually to produce and distribute an abundance of food and fiber.

Research is a never-ending job. We always need more knowledge than we have. But the passage of the Research and Marketing Act, we feel, rounds out for the time being a pretty adequate legislative framework for needed research.

We have our continuing program of production research which is the basic starting point. This program is now being expanded. In addition, the Research and Marketing Act provides for a greatly expanded program of research in marketing and distribution. One of the aims of the act is to bring research in those fields up to parity with our production work. Marketing services are stressed along with research. The act enables us to contract for research with State agencies and with private industry when work can best be done in that manner.

Funds for carrying out this act have been available for less than 6 months, and are still considerably below the authorized level. E. A. Meyer, the administrator, and his staff--with the guidance of the National Advisory Committee and various commodity and functional committees--have worked very hard to get this program set up on a sound, democratic basis and to get research projects approved and under way.

As Mr. Meyer outlines it, the marketing and distribution work during this first year will concentrate on getting new and basic information along these lines: (1) Where and how to expand market outlets; (2) how to reduce marketing costs and margins; (3) developing new standards and grades, where necessary, to improve the marketability of farm products; (4) how to improve marketing methods, facilities, and equipment; (5) how new processing and packaging techniques can be used to minimize waste and increase salability of farm produce, particularly in retail stores; and (6) collection of data and analyses of consumer demand and preferences for products of agriculture. To date 61 projects are under way, all aimed at those broad objectives....

The Department's thinking on long-range agricultural policy sums up about like this: This Nation can and must follow a policy of abundance. Our farmers want to produce abundantly and have the resources with which to do it. Our people want to consume that abundance. We have potential markets for our potential production. That is the important, encouraging thing. It makes sense to try to make the market balance the production. Any lesser effort will not make sense in our economy. Food is too important to our national strength for us to waste it, or to waste the resources which can produce it. But in producing it we want to see that farm people--all of the farm people--are adequately rewarded....

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LOVELAND, THOMSEN NAMED TO HEAD TWO PMA BRANCHES

Appointment of Albert J. Loveland as director of its Agricultural Conservation Programs Branch, and of Dr. Frederick L. Thomsen as director of its Marketing Research Branch, was announced by the Production and Marketing Administration in December.

Loveland operates a farm in Bremer County, Iowa, and has been farming since 1914. He was elected Jackson Township AAA committeeman in 1935, Bremer County AAA committeeman in 1937, and since 1941 had been chairman of the Iowa State committee.

The Agricultural Conservation Programs Branch of PMA plans and directs the agricultural conservation program which is carried out nationally under the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938.

Dr. Thomsen joined USDA's Bureau of Agricultural Economics in 1936. From 1925 to 1936 he taught agricultural economics at the University of Missouri. He holds degrees in agricultural economics from the University of Maryland (Bachelor of Science, 1917) and the University of Wisconsin (Doctor of Philosophy, 1925). From 1942 to 1947, he headed the Division of Marketing and Transportation Research in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

As director of the recently established Marketing Research Branch, Dr. Thomsen will be responsible for the review and coordination of all research projects assigned to PMA under the Research and Marketing Act of 1946 and related research work. Projects dealing with specific commodities or marketing functions will be carried out by the PMA branches concerned. Others which cut across commodity lines will be undertaken directly by the Marketing Research Branch and will be under Dr. Thomsen's direct supervision.

Also during December, Carl C. Farrington, assistant administrator of PMA and vice president of the Commodity Credit Corporation, resigned to accept a position in private business. Farrington had served in various USDA positions continuously for nearly 20 years.

# New Milk Price Formula Proposed

By Stephen O'Dea

The Federal milk order establishing minimum milk prices in the Boston market relates the fluid milk price to the prices of butter and nonfat dry milk solids by a formula method. In brief, the formula works like this: The wholesale price per pound of New York 92-score butter, plus 1.8 times the average price per pound of nonfat dry milk solids, minus 7.2 cents, is computed on a monthly basis. The result, plus a specified differential, is the fluid or Class I milk price. For each 5-cent change in the formula value, the Class I milk price changes by 22 cents. There are also seasonal price variations and at times price "floors."

But a new formula has been proposed by a committee including representatives of producers and dealers and university economists. The proposed formula would take into consideration three indexes of local and national economic conditions reflecting the state of the milk market, and would provide direct adjustments in the fluid milk price, both seasonally and for long-time trends. These production ups and downs result in too little or too much fluid milk in relation to market requirements for this milk.

The new formula, a different approach to the problem of pricing fluid milk, is based on a simple average of three indexes which, it is contended, would automatically reflect changes in national and local market conditions. These indexes are: (1) The wholesale commodity price index--to reflect changes in the general price level; (2) a New England grain-labor index based on local costs of dairy grain feeds and hired farm labor; and (3) the index of department store sales published by the Boston Federal Reserve Bank for the New England area, which is considered an indication of consumers' buying power for milk as well as other products.

## Varies With Three Indexes

The price of Class I milk for the Boston market would vary with the average of these indexes from the 1925-29 base period. This period was chosen as a base because in it each of the price factors seemed to be relatively stable, and the Boston milk market was generally considered to have been supplied adequately, yet with no burdensome surpluses. In addition to price changes that would be brought about by changes in the indexes, a seasonal adjustment in the Class I price would lower it by 44 cents per hundredweight on January 1 and again on April 1, and increase it by 44 cents per hundredweight on July 1 and October 1.

Also, whenever the amount of milk in Class II (all milk in excess of Class I or fluid needs) for a 12-month period exceeds 41 percent of the total supply of producer milk, the Class I price would be reduced by 44 cents per hundredweight. This valuation would remain in effect until the amount in Class II is reduced to 41 percent. Whenever the Class II milk for a 12-month period is less than 33 percent of the to-

tal, the Class I price would be increased 44 cents per hundredweight until the minimum reserve of 33 percent was reached. The supply-demand adjustment and the seasonal adjustment are designed to provide an adequate level of milk production annually and to encourage a more even seasonal pattern of deliveries. For several years, seasonal price adjustments have been generally used in Federal markets, including Boston.

A new pricing formula of sorts has been discussed by both industry and Government since last summer. The one here described was recommended by a committee representing economists of producer cooperative associations, milk handlers, and New England land-grant colleges. It was appointed by the administrator of the Federal milk marketing order regulating milk handling in the Greater Boston area. The Committee was commissioned to study the problems of pricing fluid milk in that market.

## Plan Now Being Studied

These committee proposals were made at a public hearing in the Boston area October 20-24, 1947. The record of the hearing is being studied in the Production and Marketing Administration and a recommended decision on the Department's appraisal of the plan will be prepared for issuance to the Secretary, and for industry exceptions, by PMA's assistant administrator in charge of marketing.

Committees have already been appointed to study the pricing of Class I-A (fluid) milk in the New York metropolitan area and in the Philadelphia market. Persons in other areas operating under Federal milk orders, including those in the several Ohio markets, have indicated interest in a study of their local problems by committees of experts familiar with local conditions. Dr. John D. Black, a committee member, said at Boston last October 22 at a public hearing on the proposed formula: "...This formula with only minor adjustments, such as using some other index of local buying power, will fit equally well all the milk markets of the eastern seaboard, and probably those as far west as Pittsburgh and Buffalo." For markets farther west, such as Cleveland, he said, "the price of milk at condenseries and of such things as butter and cheese will need to be taken into account."

If the formula works in the Boston market, presumably its use may spread to other markets. Under the heading, "Why the Butter-Powder Formula Failed," the committee's recommendation included this sentence: "Unfortunately, butter and powder prices have proved to be erratic and unreliable indicators of general economic conditions since the end of World War II, because special situations have existed with respect to these two products."

Besides Dr. Black, of the faculty of Harvard University, the committee is composed of Dr. Thurston M. Adams, economist, Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station; Wesley H. Bronson, vice president, Whiting Milk Company; Dr. George F. Dow, economist, Maine Agricultural Experiment Station; James D. Lee, economist, Boston Federal milk administrator's office; Chester W. Smith, director, Co-operative Dairy Economics Service; Dr. C. W. Swonger, research economist, New England Milk Producers' Association; and William C. Welden, economist, H. P. Hood & Sons, Inc.

# Farm War on Rats

By Kenneth Olson

"Man has been fighting the rat for centuries and has made little progress.... Defeats have been due not so much to lack of proper methods as to neglect of precautions and an absence of concerted action.... It is high time to begin."

Nearly a third of a century ago those observations were made in a yearbook of the U. S. Department of Agriculture by the late David E. Lantz, eminent biologist of the former Bureau of Biological Survey. Progress can be a slow thing, but today there finally exists what Professor Lantz was pleading for--an all-out Nation-wide war against what he called "the most destructive animal in the world."

Today's anti-rat campaign has been undertaken as an important part of the national grain conservation program. Grain supplies must be stretched to the limit if they are to meet both the Nation's needs and commitments abroad. Rats eat or otherwise destroy an amazing total of farm grain estimated at 200,000,000 bushels a year. If the campaign can stop a substantial part of this loss, it will make a rewarding contribution to mankind.

The 1948 rat control plan asks three things of every rural community:

(1) A vigorous educational program on rats and how to control them;

(2) County-wide "R-days" when rural folks will be asked to open their offensives against rats;

(3) A continuing, long-term program of rat-proofing, cleanup of hiding places, and rat extermination.

## Now Is the Time

"Anytime is a good time to kill rats, but late fall, winter, and early spring are the best periods of the year," said the recent declaration of war, made cooperatively by USDA and the Fish and Wildlife Service of the U. S. Department of the Interior. "This is the time when rats come in from outdoor nests and fields to seek the shelter and warmth of farm buildings--and to live on the food and feed supplies of the farmstead. Their numbers, therefore, are more concentrated then than at any other time of year, and they are easier to reach with poisons and other extermination materials.

"There are as many rats in the United States as people. They destroy valuable property and spread disease, including bubonic plague, typhus fever, and trichinosis. It is estimated that three-fourths of the Nation's rats live in rural areas. They are causing an annual grain loss to the Nation of not less than $500,000,000.

"Farm rats can be controlled if all farm folks work together on this campaign. During these times of critical food and feed shortages, we can't afford the luxury of turning over at least 4 percent of our grain crop to rats as their share. Nor can we afford to be complacent about the menace to national health and sanitation that arises from their mere presence in a community."

The agricultural Extension Service and rodent control experts of the Fish and Wildlife Service are providing generalship for the battle. Some States, including Oklahoma and Virginia, had all-out offensives under way before the end of 1947. Others are swinging into action and will have major campaigns going before mild spring weather disperses farm rats to outdoor hiding places.

## Rat War Not New

There is nothing new, of course, about a war on rats. They are one of man's oldest enemies. Today's war is an innovation, however, in that it is Nation-wide. Instead of emerging only as a few scattered skirmishes, it is being fought on a front stretching through 48 States and the Territories.

Wherever farm community rat campaigns have been undertaken, phenomenal success has been reported. Putnam County, Ind., had an autumn "rat banquet" in which more than 1,000 persons set out red squill bait on a designated day and then followed up by using control measures including cleanup of farm premises and ratproofing. "We are sure that our eradication program was successful," reported the county agricultural agent, "and we believe the control program to be effective because our office calls requesting information for killing rats have been very, very materially reduced, and many farmers keep telling us they haven't seen a rat on their farm since the 'banquet'."

October 13, 1947, was an unlucky day for rats in Nueces County, Tex., since it marked the opening of a poisoning campaign that accounted for 15,681 known dead, plus approximately 5,000 others that were found later. This dramatic campaign, which cost less than 1 1/2 cents for each rat killed, was conducted cooperatively by the county agricultural agent and a representative of the Fish and Wildlife Service. These modern Pied Pipers used the deadly new poison "1080," a wartime development so lethal it can be used only by experts. A total of 815 country places were treated, at a cost for materials of only $200.05.

"It is estimated that over 23 carloads of grain have been saved in Nueces County this year by the control of rats alone," said the official report of the campaign. "Claude McCain, a farmer in the Banquete community, stated that 300 rats were picked up on his place. Mr. McCain said it was a great saving to get rid of these rats, as they were eating more grain per day than three shoats. Paul Wenland of the Violet community reported that 204 rats were killed on his farm in one night; this number of rats filled a bushel basket.

"The farm and ranch rat campaign in Nueces County not only helped

in the conservation of feed but also the control of typhus. Last year 60 cases of typhus were reported in this county, while this year (1947) only three cases of typhus were reported.... Since starting the rat campaign in the farm and ranch areas in the county, not a single case of typhus has been reported in rural areas."

Practically every farmer who undertakes a rat-poisoning campaign is startled when he begins counting the number of dead. Rats are sly enough to live unobtrusively in a shadow world and few farmers ever realize how many they may be providing with free board. Dr. Harold Gunderson, a rodent scientist of Iowa State College, has come up with an interesting rule-of-thumb formula for figuring how many rats there are on an average farm.

## Rat Count Formula

"If you never see rats, but see signs of rats and rat damage," says Dr. Gunderson, "There are from one to 100 rats on your farm.

"If you see rats now and then at night, there are from 100 to 500.

"If you see rats every night and a few occasionally in the daytime, you are boarding from 500 to 1,000.

"If you see lots of rats at night and several every day, you probably have from 1,000 to 5,000 rats."

And it is no exaggeration that some large farms actually support 1,000 to 5,000 rats. Each rat eats as much as a laying hen. It's no wonder that one poultry farmer, who had so many hens that they consumed a carload of feed a day, computed his loss from rats at $10,000 a year. He began a rat hunt in two of his several poultry houses. Each night for four successive nights he killed a hundred rats. At that, he estimated, he had killed only one out of every five rats in the two buildings.

Our Government has been working seriously on the problem of rat control for a third of a century. Here and there, communities, cities, and even States have tried to do something about the menace. Virginia, in 1923, had a State-wide anti-rat campaign in which more than 110 tons of poisoned bait were distributed, with generally good temporary results.

During late 1933 and early 1934, the Civil Works Administration put 10,000 men to work in a whirlwind campaign to control disease-carrying rats in Texas, Georgia, and Alabama. A total of 747,608 locations were treated to rid them of rats and rat-borne fleas, and an estimated 7 1/2 million rats were killed. What had been identified by the U. S. Public Health Service as a threatening typhus plague was nipped in the bud. New York, New Orleans, St. Louis, and many other cities have found it necessary to fight rats unceasingly.

These and other campaigns point out what can be done, but they are not enough. Rats are like flies; stamp them out at one point and they will swarm back from other breeding grounds. The Department of Agricul-

ture and the Fish and Wildlife Service believe that today's all-out war is the only answer.

Rats undoubtedly are the most cunning of all farm pests, and their sly ways have made the word "rat" synonymous with all things sneaky and evil. Fortunately for farmers, they are an adversary that through thousands of years has been whittled down to a size that can be handled. Fossil bones show that prehistoric rodents, the ancestors of rats, beavers, squirrels, and their many cousins, were actually as big as oxen.

## Three Kinds of Common Rats

There are three kinds of common rats in the United States. None is native; all come in from the Old World. The most formidable and the most widely distributed is the brown rat, known also as gray, barn, wharf, sewer, or Norway rat. It is a tough fighter, is able to find food and shelter under seemingly impossible circumstances, is amazingly prolific. It begins to breed when three or four months old, and one pair can become the parents of 50 to 75 young in a year. Professor Lantz, as a result of his studies, pointed out rats as a "menace to the human race" and declared: "At the maximum rate of increase and without check, in a few years the rats in the world would consume all vegetable and animal products, and the earth would become a lifeless waste."

The brown rat probably originated in the Orient and came to the United States around the time of the Revolution, but the black rat immigrated from Europe, probably soon after the settlement of the Atlantic coast. It has disappeared from many parts of the country, driven out by the more robust and fiercer brown rat. The black rat is the ancestor of the white or albino rat that frequently is found leading a quiet life as a child's pet or as a subject of experimentation in medical laboratories.

A third form is the roof rat, or Alexandrian rat, probably a southern form of the black rat. It is common throughout the Southern States and has been able to compete with the brown rat, probably because of its habit of living and nesting in trees.

That rats can be brought almost completely under control through persistent, intelligent, and cooperative effort is demonstrated by the community campaigns that have been undertaken. Any program, to be successful, must include these four points:

1. Killing them--through poisons, gassing, trapping, dogs, etc.

2. Cleaning up premises--so they won't have nesting places.

3. Starving them--by keeping food supplies beyond reach.

4. Ratproofing buildings--so they'll find it impossible to get in.

Several effective rat poisons are available. Red squill is highly recommended for general use since it is least dangerous to human beings

and farm animals and at the same time is highly toxic to rats. A fairly new poison, ANTU, is highly effective against the common brown rat, though much less so against black or climbing rats. It must be used with great care since it will kill dogs and other pets, pigs, and young chicks. Zinc phosphide also is highly effective, though it too is very toxic and must be used cautiously. New wartime poisons such as Compound 1080 are so lethal that only a specially trained operator should use them. A mere half ounce of 1080 in a gallon of water makes a drinking poison so powerful that one sip will kill a rat.

Fresh baits should be used when poisoning rats, and the proper amount of poison must be mixed in. Strategic placement is important. Don't put bait out in the open, rat experts say, but in dark, half-hidden places where rats are more likely to travel. Pre-baiting is recommended for best results. This means leaving out unpoisoned bait for two or three nights until the rats get accustomed to eating it--then setting out poisoned bait in the same places.

Traps are helpful, but rat experts say you need to use plenty of them. Despite its reputation, cheese is not an infallible bait. Bacon strips, a piece of fresh fish, or bacon-scented oatmeal are better. Baits may not even be necessary if the trigger surface of an ordinary snare trap is enlarged by fastening to it a larger square of cardboard or tin and the improved trap is placed in a runway where rats will cross over it.

## Good and Poor Ways To Kill Rats

Many rat-catching techniques get discussed but poisoning and trapping, as well as gassing if done by an expert, are about as effective as any known. Shooting rats is hardly efficient. Small terrier dogs may be helpful but they cannot rid the premises of the pests. Cats rarely do much good; rats are generally too big and fierce for them. Natural enemies, such as hawks, owls, and snakes, should be encouraged rather than destroyed but should not be relied on to do the whole job. Virus diseases, supposedly capable of starting an epidemic among rats, are interesting to think about but rarely have proved effective. Also they may be dangerous to people since the bacteria used belong to the same group as food-poisoning bacilli.

Only in the realm of fantasy belong such devices as tying a bell to a rat, singeing it or painting it red, then letting it run back to its nesting places in the hope that it will frighten away other rats. Other folklore, equally ineffective includes: Setting out plaster of paris and water, so the rat will eat the plaster, drink the water, and have his intestinal tract stopped up; setting out food with broken glass in it, to rupture the rat's intestines; putting broken glass in runways, to cut the rat's feet and legs and cause him to bleed to death. Needless to say, all such schemes are both impractical and cruel.

"Ever since the Pied Piper legend," said a leading rat control specialist, "mankind has been searching for some easy way out of rat trouble. When it is realized that good, hard work is the only answer, adequate control will begin to be obtained."

# Save by Controlling Pantry Pests

By L. S. Henderson

Here's an opportunity for homemakers to save both food and money. This can be done by saving grain products from destruction by the insect pests that destroy food.

Large quantities of grain are destroyed every year because insects destroy food products made of grain. If every family in the United States threw away only 25 cents' worth of cereal food because it had become infested with insects, the loss would be about 7 1/2 million dollars. This would buy over 2 million bushels of grain. Actually, the losses taking place in kitchen cupboards and pantries probably far exceed this amount.

You may think the amount of food you can save insignificant. But add your saving to that resulting from the united effort of your fellow citizens and the total is enough to help pull many starving people through a crisis. In addition, saving food will save you money.

To control pantry pests just follow these five steps: (1) Clean your pantry shelves thoroughly. (2) Spray the cupboard with 5 percent DDT. (3) Inspect all packages of food for insects. (4) Sterilize products by heating at 140° F. for half an hour. (5) Store food in tight containers.

## Clean the Shelves

Food gets spilled. Particles sift out of packages. This food stays on the shelf or lodges in cracks and corners. Insects can live on this food. They get into food you might place on the shelves later. Cleaning shelves removes this home source of infestation.

## Spray With DDT

Remove all packages of food and spray a 5 percent DDT solution on the interior surfaces of the cupboard. A deposit of DDT crystals will remain after the liquid has dried. These crystals will be effective for several months. Insects that crawl around inside sprayed cupboards will be killed before they have a chance to lay eggs and start new infestations. Wait till the spray dries before putting packages back on the shelves. The dry DDT deposit will not harm food inside the packages. (Neither will it harm the insects inside the packages, because the insects will not come in contact with the insecticide crystals.)

## Inspect Food Packages

You may find insects in flour, meal, cereals, cornstarch, crackers, breakfast foods, macaroni, and spaghetti. Look through such foods carefully. Insects that feed on grain products may also be found in spices, nut meats, chocolate, cocoa, dehydrated foods, dried fruits, dry soup

mixes, dog biscuit, and bird seed. Remember that food is not ruined just because a few beetles have crawled into it. These insects are not poisonous. They do not carry disease. A few in flour, for instance, can be picked out, or the flour sifted through a fine sieve. Sterilize food which will not be used right away and store it in tight containers, as described below. Heavily infested products may have to be destroyed or fed to chickens.

## Sterilize With Heat

Most dry food products can be freed of insect life by heating them in the oven at 140° F. for about half an hour. Small packages can be heated just as they are. The contents of larger packages may be spread on cake or pie pans or on baking sheets, so the heat can penetrate more easily. If eggs or insects are already in the food they will continue to develop even in a tight container. So if there is any question about the product being infested, give it the heat treatment.

## Store in Tight Containers

Store such foods in clean metal or glass containers with tight-fitting lids--such as lard buckets, coffee cans, or jars. Before reusing a container that has held infested food, heat the container in boiling water or in the oven.

Use up the contents of one package before opening another. When you open a new package, store the unused remainder in a covered container. The cover must fit tightly to prevent tiny insects from crawling in.

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## JANUARY-MARCH MALT ALLOCATIONS ANNOUNCED

Barley malt export allocations totaling 1,800,000 bushels for the January-March 1948 quarter were announced by USDA early in January. These allocations include 1,252,000 bushels for Western Hemisphere countries and the Philippines, 240,000 bushels for European countries, 133,000 for other countries, and 175,000 bushels as a contingency reserve.

Malt was returned to specific export control on October 24, 1947, after having been on general license since March 15, 1947. During the period of general license the actual exports averaged about 950,000 bushels a month, as against the 600,000 bushels a month that had been set up for the first quarter of 1948.

The record since January 1947 shows: Allocations of 450,000 bushels a month for the first quarter of 1947; actual exports of approximately 950,000 bushels a month during the March 16-October 23, 1947, period of general license; allocations of 400,000 bushels a month in November-December 1947; allocations of 600,000 a month for January-March 1948.

## TRANSPORTATION OF FARM PRODUCTS STUDIED AS RESEARCH AND MARKETING ACT PROJECT

A study aimed at improving the transportation of farm products from farm to market was approved by USDA early in January as a project under the Research and Marketing Act. First work on the program will be an attempt to find out how present equipment, services, handling practices, and rules and regulations can be made more efficient, less expensive, or less restrictive. On the basis of findings an effort will be made in cooperation with carriers, shippers, and farm organizations to work out and generally apply the answers to the most serious transportation problems.

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## RADIO BROADCASTS HELP SMALLER LIVESTOCK MARKETS

How radio stations can help smaller livestock markets was indicated recently when the bookkeeper at a Sylvania, Ga., livestock market telephoned the PMA office at Atlanta. The bookkeeper said she had missed by a minute or two the livestock part of the daily noon market news broadcast over a 50,000-watt Atlanta station. She asked for the Thomasville, Ga., and Chicago hog prices, explaining that the Sylvania market used this information daily in setting its prices, and that she relied on the broadcast for information. Sylvania is 245 miles from Atlanta.

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## MARKETING QUOTAS ON 1948 PEANUT CROP TERMINATED

Marketing quotas on the 1948 crop of peanuts were terminated by Secretary of Agriculture Anderson on January 2 because of the world shortage of foods, fats, and oils.

Under marketing quotas, production in 1948 would have been approximately 2,359,000 acres, compared with approximately 3,378,000 acres harvested for nuts in 1947. The 1948 allotment would have been about 30 percent less than the average acreage harvested for nuts in 1942-46.

Last December 2, Secretary Anderson issued a statement saying quotas and allotments for the 1948 crop probably would be suspended. Peanut producers voted in favor of quotas for the next 3 years, making the quota machinery available for 1949 and 1950 in the event conditions should make it necessary to impose marketing quotas for peanuts. Official returns of the December 9 referendum show that 92,136 peanut producers, or 87.7 percent of those voting, favored quotas, whereas 12,953, or 12.3 percent, disapproved. Under the Agricultural Adjustment Act, peanut quotas are in effect for 3 years following a two-thirds favorable vote in the referendum, but the Secretary of Agriculture may increase or terminate quotas for any year if upon investigation he finds either action warranted.

MARKETING BRIEFS:

Dairy Products.--Between December 5 and 29, 1947, PMA announced amendment of the milk marketing orders at New York City (27) and the Quad Cities (Moline, East Moline, and Rock Island, Ill., and Davenport, Iowa--44); announced issuance of orders at Topeka, Kans. (80) and Paducah, Ky. (77); and announced that USDA would issue no amendment to the agreement and order in the Dubuque, Iowa, area (12).

Fats and Oils.--On December 11, USDA announced smaller first-quarter allocations of fats and oils than for the same period in 1947, but said that actual shipments during the period would include quantities carried over from fourth-quarter 1947 allocations. First-quarter 1948 allocations that were announced total 87 million pounds, consisting of 63.8 million pounds of fats and oils for commercial shipment and 23.2 million pounds of shelled peanuts on an oil-content basis to be supplied by the Commodity Credit Corporation. For the first quarter of 1947 the export allocations (excluding exchanges and unshipped balances which had been reallocated) totaled 145.8 million pounds.... Import licenses as required under War Food Order 63 will be granted for the importation of palm oil from the Belgian Congo and Netherlands East Indies, USDA announced early in January.... USDA announced January 8 that the remainder of fats and oils to be bought by CCC against fourth-quarter 1947 allocations was 41.4 million pounds.

Fruits and Vegetables.--In mid-December, USDA announced that the CCC had offered to buy from certified seed potato growers and dealers approximately 150,000 sacks of certified seed potatoes, to be exported during January and February to Austria. Varieties to be purchased included Sebago, Chippewa, Katahdin, Green Mountains, and Cobblers.... Official U. S. consumer standards for Irish potatoes became effective December 8. Permissive standards, they are the first set of consumer standards issued by USDA in the fresh fruit and vegetable field. They provide four descriptive size classifications to be specified in connection with the grades. They include U. S. grades A and B, large; U. S. grades A and B, medium to large; U. S. grades A and B. medium; and U. S. grades A and B, small.... A public hearing on a proposed marketing agreement and order for Irish potatoes will be held, beginning January 12, covering the commercial early potato producing areas in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Maryland.... Hearings on a proposed marketing agreement regulating the handling of fresh peaches, requested by peach growers in North Carolina and South Carolina, are scheduled to begin January 5. The proposed marketing agreement and order program would regulate by grade, size, quality, and maturity all interstate shipments of peaches grown in the two States. Peach industry members feel that the operation of such a program will keep low-quality peaches off the commercial market and supply the consumer with better quality fruit. ... On December 22, the Commodity Credit Corporation bought 20,000 tons pf dried prunes at prices averaging $199.56 a ton. This brought the total bought during the current marketing season to 86,000 tons.... USDA announced early in January that evaporators, processors, and packers

would soon be invited to submit offers to sell up to 1,250 tons of packed dried apples to CCC on a bid basis. Offers were to be considered on a total of 500 tons produced in California and 750 tons in other producing States.... On January 6, USDA said that announcement and offer forms to be used in submitting offers to sell to CCC up to 5,000 tons of golden bleached raisins would be mailed the following week. The proposed purchase is in addition to the 100,000 tons of sun-dried Thompson Seedless raisins for which CCC had previously made contract awards.

Grain.--Grain export quotas for February 1948 announced by USDA on December 22 total 995,500 long tons (37,654,000 bushels) of wheat, flour (in wheat equivalent), and oats. The January quotas totaled 969,500 long tons (34,014,000 bushels). PMA will supply 95.7 percent of the February allocations of wheat, 57 percent of the flour, and all the oats. ... January-June 1948 export allocations of 4,022,100 hundred-pound bags of rice were announced by USDA on December 23. This quantity approximately equals that allocated during the corresponding period of the preceding year. The announced allocations bring the total for the July 1947-June 1948 fiscal year to 8,100,000 bags, about 35 percent of the estimated total supply.... USDA announced on December 23 that protein feeds and mixed feeds would be subject to emergency export allocation during the January-June 1948 period, excepting certain low-protein feeds and mixed feeds containing 25 percent or less of protein that are now under general license to the Philippines and Western Hemisphere countries.

Livestock and Meat.--Allocation of 13,200,000 pounds of meat and meat products for commercial export, largely to U. S. Government projects, the Philippines, and the American Republics, during the January-March quarter of 1948 were announced by USDA on December 23. The allocation represents about one-fourth of 1 percent of anticipated U. S. production for the quarter.

Sugar.--Early in January, USDA announced a determination by the Secretary of Agriculture that sugar consumption requirements of the continental United States for the calendar year 1948 will amount to 7,800,000 short tons, raw value. This determination was based on a consumption amounting to 7,431,000 short tons, raw value, for the 12 months ended October 31, 1947, the statutory base period. In addition, there were allowances of 50,000 short tons for deficiency in inventories and 319,000 short tons for changes in population and in demand conditions.... Sugar consumption requirements and quotas for the 1948 calendar year for Puerto Rico are 120,000 short tons, raw value, and for Hawaii are 45,500 short tons, raw value. These figures represent increases over 1947 of 8,000 tons for Puerto Rico and 7,250 tons for Hawaii.

Tobacco.--The Commodity Credit Corporation will enter into special contracts with tobacco companies designated by the French Tobacco Monopoly to procure 1947-crop Burley, dark air-cured, and fire-cured tobaccos for the Monopoly. It is estimated that total CCC purchases may amount to $3,500,000 under the program.

The following addresses and publications, issued recently, may be obtained upon request. To order, check on this page the items desired, detach and mail to the Production and Marketing Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

Addresses:

A Little Cloud Out of the Sea, by Clinton P. Anderson, Secretary of Agriculture, at Everett, Wash. December 11, 1947. 14 pp. (Mimeographed)

The Farmer in Apollo's Temple, by Clinton P. Anderson, Secretary of Agriculture, at Cleveland, Ohio. January 7, 1948. 14 pp. (Mimeographed)

Food for Tomorrow, by Clinton P. Anderson, Secretary of Agriculture. Columbia Broadcasting System. December 7, 1947. 2 pp. (Mimeographed)

The Long-Range Viewpoint for Livestock, Meat, and Wool, by H. E. Reed, Director, Livestock Branch, PMA, at San Francisco, Calif. November 20, 1947. 7 pp. (Mimeographed)

Publications:

Further Developments in Cotton Standardization and Related Activities. (PMA) SRA-165. November 1947. 35 pp. (Printed)

Fiber and Spinning Test Results for Some Pure Varieties Grown by Selected Cotton Improvement Groups, Crop of 1947 (Supplement 1). (PMA) December 1947. 5 pp. (Multilithed)

Fats and Oils--Supply and Disposition Specified Periods (Estimated), October 1, 1947-July 1, 1948. (PMA) December 1947. 28 pp. (Mimeographed)

Market News Offices--Location, Commodities, Officials in Charge. (PMA) December 1947. 9 pp. (Mimeographed)

Soybeans--Production, Farm Disposition, and Value, by States, 1924-44. (Bureau of Agricultural Economics) October 1947. 16 pp. (Multilithed)

Marketing Colorado Boxed Peaches in the Twin Cities--1947. (Farm Credit Administration) MR-111. 21 pp. (Multilithed)

The use of Carbon Dioxide for Controlling Rodents in Cold Storage Rooms. (Office of the Secretary) December 1947. 6 pp. (Mimeographed)


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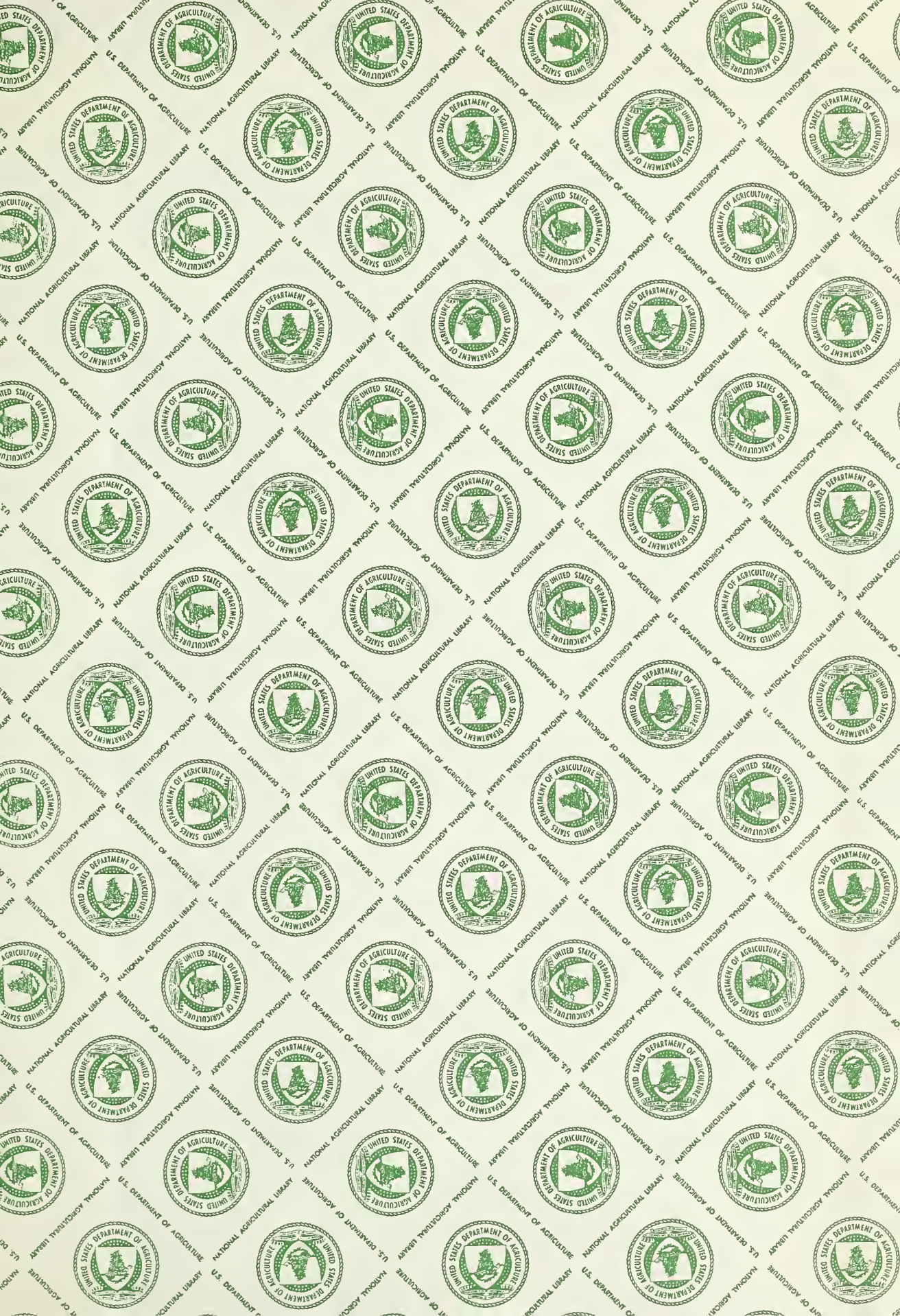
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